In the Specification:

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 28 with the following paragraph:

-- The present invention achieves the aforementioned exemplary objectives by providing a generally cylindrical expansible shaft having an outer profile. The shaft includes a generally cylindrical inner body having a longitudinal axis and at least one first coupling element. At least two ~~semi-circular~~arcuate leaf elements may be movably coupled to the first coupling element of the inner body by means of at least one second coupling element. The leaf elements may together substantially form the outer profile of the generally cylindrical expansible shaft. At least one thrusting element may be operatively disposed between the leaf elements and the inner body to move the leaf elements radially outwards relative to the longitudinal axis to increase an outer diameter of the shaft when in a first configuration, and allow the leaf elements to move radially inwards relative to the longitudinal axis to decrease the outer diameter of the shaft when in a second configuration. --

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 8 with the following paragraph:

-- For the expansible shaft described above, the leaf elements may be resiliently biased radially inwards by means of a spring disposed between the inner body and the leaf elements. The spring may be either a leaf, wave or a coil spring. The first and second coupling elements may be complementary hooks. In a particular embodiment disclosed, the shaft may include two first and two second coupling elements, and three ~~semi-circular~~arcuate leaf elements. The leaf elements may include a plurality of knurls on an outer surface for increasing friction of

engagement with a core of a product to be gripped. The expansible shaft may further include an air journal removably coupled with the inner body and including an intake opening for permitting air to be supplied to the thrusting element for moving the leaf elements to the first configuration. The air journal may further include an exit opening for permitting air to be removed from the thrusting element for moving the leaf elements to the second configuration. The air journal may also include a keyed and/or a slotted locking member engageable with the inner body for imparting rotational torque transmission to the shaft, and a keyed and/or a slotted locking member engageable with a journal end connectable to a drive unit for driving the shaft for imparting rotational torque transmission to the shaft. --

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 29 with the following paragraph:

-- As shown in Figs. 1-3 and 8-9, expansible shaft 10 may generally include a longitudinal axis A-A and leaves 12, 14, 16, coupled with inner body 18 and movable radially outwardly with respect to body 18 by means of thrusting means 19, 20, 21 (Figs. 18-19). For the exemplary embodiment disclosed, it should be noted that although three leaves 12, 14, 16 are shown, the present invention may employ two or more leaves so long as the leaves form a generally cylindrical expansible shaft or form the outer profile of a non-cylindrical shaft when coupled with inner body 18. Each leaf 12, 14, 16 may include a generally ~~semi-circular~~arcuate cross-section having a hollowed cavity 22 disposed generally centrally along the length thereof. The outer surface of each leaf 12, 14, 16 may be formed of a suitable friction material and include longitudinally extending knurls 15 for facilitating retention of a core and the like during driving or braking of shaft 10. Hollow cavity 22 may include a bottom surface 24 having a central

flat face 26 and mirror-image tapered surfaces 28 disposed adjacent flat face 26 for facilitating uniform expansion of thrusting means 19, 20, 21. --

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11 with the following paragraph:

-- Still referring to Figs. 1-3 and 8-9, each leaf 12, 14, 16 may further include mirror-image longitudinally extending hook members 30, 32 respectively engageable and retainable with complementary mirror-image longitudinally extending hook members 34, 36 of inner body 18. The top faces 38, 40 of each complementary hook member 34, 36 may be rounded for complementary engagement with internal wall 42 of leaves 12, 14, 16. The bottom faces 44, 46 of each hook member 34, 36 may be machined or otherwise formed for complementary engagement with the surface of leaf shaft retract springs 98, as illustrated in Figs. 18 and 19. Thrusting means 19, 20, 21 may each comprise tubes which receive air pressure therein in a well-known manner to respectively expand and force leaves 12, 14, 16 radially outwardly with respect to body 18. As shown in FIG. 1, each leaf 12, 14, 16 may include a predetermined gap 52 between each adjacent leaf when coupled to inner body 18 for permitting uniform expansion and contraction thereof relative to inner body 18. --

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 4 with the following paragraph:

-- Still referring to Figs. 1 and 4-7, air journal 54 may include three symmetrically disposed retention faces 84, 86, 88 each including internally threaded holes 90 for permitting removable retention of leaf ring 92 (Figs. 10-12). Faces 74, 76, 78 adjacent retention faces 84, 86, 88 may each include a pair of internally threaded holes 94, 96 disposed on opposite ends of ribs 82 for permitting retention of leaf shaft retract springs 98, described in detail below. The

internal area of shaft 56 may be hollowed as at 100 for reducing the overall weight of air journal 54. --